

SPRINGFIELD RESIDENCE
PRE-INAGURAL

DRAWER 9

ELECTION 1860

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Abraham Lincoln's Political Career through 1860

Springfield Residence Pre-Inaugural

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

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(1)

Alvin. - Springfield Residence -
Black, Jeremiah S. Pre-Inaugural
(Buchanan's Atty. Gen. & later Secy. of
State),
Piatt, Judge

(Note: The top of this page was written, and then cut off and
appended to page 4.)

Tuesday - Arrived to day. - was taken by the
committee to Mr Lincoln's house where we had supper
Mr & Mrs L expressed themselves glad to see us. Mr
Lincoln sat at the head of the table with two
boys clambering over him chattering like jays
eating like monkeys. Wondered if the boys
would continue their domestic practices at the

(1)

Edwin - Springfield Residence
Block, Fremont St. Pre-Inaugural
(Buchanan City, now & later see of
Buchanan, Judge Pitt, see Pitt)

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Tuesday - Arrived to day, - was taken by the
committee to Mr Lincoln's house where we had supper
Mr & Mrs L expressed themselves glad to see us. Mr
Lincoln sat at the head of the table with two
boys climbing over him clattering like Jays
eating like Monkeys. Wondered if the boys
would continue their domestic practices at the
White House. Did not put my queries into words
however. Mr Lincoln asked about Schenck. Had
an opportunity however to put in a word. After
supper we took to the house of Mr South about
in law by Mr Lincoln. Found them plain
unassuming sort of people. ^{Don't} put one through
a cross examination on the subject of contracts
said he did not care for offices - but would
get after a few contracts if he could. Turned
into a feather bed and slept from fatigue
Wednesday Saw Mr Lincoln this morning at
his office surrounded all the time by country
people. Met again hubois & took him into
my confidence - Told me that Trumbull and
have more to do with making up the Cabinet
than any one else. Doubt whether Trumbull
would favor Schenck, an old democrat does
not harmonize with an old democrat. Lincoln
titled himself back in a chair in his office
and putting his long feet upon the round

sat with his thin legs drawn up and presented a most extraordinary appearance. He has no dignity whatever. He is on the most familiar terms with the people here who call him to his face either Abe or Lincoln. I saw however that he has a sort of awkward reserve. A fellow under the influence of liquor pushed his way in and addressing Mr Lincoln in a rough familiar way became quite offensive. Mr Lincoln's usually face assumed a cold expression that told on the man who soon became silent.

I heard him say to day that the trouble at the South was a political matter that would blow itself out in a few days - He called it a wind: gust and illustrated it by a very funny and very dirty story.

Thursday - It is really amusing to see the manner in which the people take Lincoln to themselves. His triumph is the triumph of each. The town is full of the roughest country folk many of them from a distance and each speaks of old Abe as though he were one of the family and the more ludicrous is to hear men aged enough to be his father calling him old Abe. Mrs Mrs Lincoln out shopping met her with her. Asked me if I thought there would be any trouble with the South. Poor Mr I doubted whether her husband would be inaugurated at Washington. At first she was alarmed and said I ought to talk to Mr Lincoln that Mr Lincoln did not believe there would be any "fight at all" The she broke into a violent somewhat ungrammatical attack on the Abolitionists. Tried to take her into my confidence and say a word in behalf of Schenck but she seemed possessed of a blind fury and abused Seward until we separated. Still a crawling sensation up my back, when I think of the people occupying the White House. Wrote to Schenck

Monday. Sick all night from an attack of the
 mosquito and feather bed. Louise told me that
 Mrs S. said I was to be Private Secretary. Said
 if we had to live in the White House she would die
 of mortification. Calmed her fears by assuring her
 that Mr Nicolay had been selected for that place
 and that, far as I could observe Mr N did not
 seem to fear the consequences. Saw Mr L a good
 deal to day, but always in a crowd. tried to
 draw him out on the Cabinet but failed. Not at
 his uncouth roughness and positive rudgarity etc
 is a certain sort of reserve he can put on
 that exhibits a self posesssion and will that takes
 the place of dignity and repels approach
 I observe however that this comes out only when he
 encounters people of culture. With the ignorant
 he turns them off with funny and very ~~dirty~~ stories
 These stories are strangely to the point and he
 seems to have an inexhaustable supply. He is
 the political Leo of our time. Stuck out the crowd
 in the evening and for the first time heard Mr
 S. express an opinion on Schenck, when Mrs L
 broke in with lively abuse of Schenck. I listened
 good naturally or rather with indifference and
 when she ended said quietly "Billy Seward would
 be hurt in his feelings were he to hear that opinion
 of him" I lastly said he never would hear ^{it} from
 me "Then" added L. Mrs Lincoln would be greatly
 disappointed" This knocked us both over and
 I hauled off. Before I could do so Mrs Lincoln
 got in a stunner by saying "I only say what
 you have said a thousand times only I say
 it to a man's face and I intend to say it"

- to do nasty old abolitionist the first time I see him. Went to bed sick of the whole con-
-cern. Could not sleep. There may be men who know the people Mr. L. intends to call about him but they are not in Springfield or if they are they keep secrets better than any lot I ever encountered before. There is one trait in the President elect that is remarkable and that is the cool indifference with which he accepts the situation. This may come of ignorance and it may come of superior ability. When within in a crowd he believes the first. When I remember ~~some~~ of his shrewd observations and his debate with Douglass I believe the last. I am in-
-fused with the feeling that there is no chance for Schenck. Once first place, he had no hand in the nomination and in the second, he is not the sort of man to harmonize with L. He is a gentleman. I hear much talk about Judah all concur in asserting that if he is sent in the Cabinet he will certainly have a hand in making it. Doubt it. He makes fun of Judah but then he makes fun of every body. He is and nearly put my eyes out writing to S. said "Our President elect's great trait is shrewd-
-ness commonly called cunning. He will make his Cabinet as he would swap horses expecting to be cheated and determined to cheat if possible I have not much hope. He does not believe ~~any~~ more than you do of the grave trouble at the South and will probably make up his Cabinet in the old style of paying off political services and pro-
-viding for the succession. The only evidence

I have of Seward being even consulted ~~to create~~ poster Mrs. Lincoln keeps up. She must have had something from her husband to start her in that direction. No telling however you know what a violent hair brained woman she is. I wish you were here. You & I are old whigs ~~you know~~

Saw a very queer looking young man seated at a table in a room of the State House introduced to him as a Captain Ellsworth. Has elaborated a tremendous Zouave Army that it is said Mr Lincoln favors. Suggested to the Youth that a Zouave was not made out of a pair of baggy breeches but was a born devil developed in Algiers. Mr Lincoln told me afterwards that it was a harmless hobby that he had no objection to have the young fellow ride and illustrated by the bachelors here that he was offering for sale, some one objected that the animal's head was too large when the bachelors responded that the animal carried it himself. This I record as the only decent story I have heard from him so far. Put me through a cross examination as to my past life, A little awkward as it was done in the presence of a crowd I don't know why he did unless he has designs on me such as I have heard whispered about. I discovered that his literary education does not amount to much. I doubt whether he has ever read a book other than one on law or politics. There is a talk of his going to Chicago. If he does it is to have his Cabinet made up for him. Had a talk with Harscimb. He says Lincoln will make his own cabinet and rule out candidates for the Presidency. He tells me that Lincoln isn't to be ruled or influenced by any one and shaks his head mysteriously as if he knew all about it & he said it would be in the Herald.

TALKED to Prentiss about it and told him in
 confidence of my anxiety to have S in the
 Cabinet. I thought it was a good suggestion
 but declined making it. Said he thought
 L ought to go to Chicago where he would
 meet ^{did} the leading men and be influenced
 for good. I listened gravely to my belief
 that we were going to have trouble, - could
 not realize it to the same extent as I did.
 Thinks not L. that it will blow over. I
 is a thoughtful able man and ought to be
 President. It is strange to see this un-
 court ignorant first President of the United
 States while a statesman like Prentiss is
 not even consulted. All the talk here is
 about Judah. Judah is I suppose some pol-
 itician who organized the forces of Illinois
 for Lincoln. I tell me I do not appreciate
 Lincoln, that he is a great man well, he
 may be he certainly is a very extraordinary
 one. But I cannot help believing that his
 success will depend on his having an
 able Cabinet. Told I that Mr. Lincoln ought
 to take two or three able & popular men
 from the South and suggested Henry Winter Davis.
 Asked me questions about Davis but thought
 that the men who had made the fight ought
 to be selected. I suggested that the proposed
 trip Chicago when Lincoln would fall into
 the hands of the politicians not good as I did
 not believe the influence would be for the best.
 He thought differently, said Lincoln had been out
 of public life so long that local politicians

had undue weight with him and that it would be well to bring him in contact with leading men as soon as possible.

Saturday Read Prescott Smith's letter to the President elect - Seemed to amuse him hugely. Said "so Mr. Gamett promises to deliver me without damage in Washington?" I replied that I believed there might be some hazard in the delivery but if ~~there~~ ^{insure} were Mr. Gamett certainly had the power to ~~care~~ safety "You think there is some danger" "I think there is to be trouble - the shape it may assume I am not able to divine" "Yes Yes" he added laughing "You scared Mrs. Lincoln into a chicken fit but I don't believe these fellows are as bad as that" I told him I thought they meant business and he threw up my ~~new~~ San the Union Speech to me and laughed immoderately. I told him that was for him to do but that I knew the Southerners people I thought and what was worse the Southerners knew the North.

"Why" he said "they could not raise enough money to arm & equip a regiment - These curse Yankees have made all the money & have all the material - Why they couldn't get a gun without the consent of New England - " He continued in this strain the crowd joining in. I felt awkward for they all quoted my speech on me, I noticed however when I said with some vehemence that for every soldier we would raise at the North the Democrat would recruit two, that the Democratic party was a fighting party as Schenck & I had discovered in Egypt, while our people were respectable peace men they became grave - think he will go to Baltimore & Ohio RR yet -

~~Friday~~ Asked S this morning what church the President elect was in the habit of attending - He answered with a broad grin "the Broad Street" Saw him shortly after breakfast walking towards the State House He certainly presented the strangest most uncouth and almost hideous appearance. Pall, bony angular with limbs out of all proportion - round shouldered his every movement awkward as if each part of him moved on its own separate impulse.

Chicago Nov. 21st 60

Wornied by rail road travelling. Found at the Belmont House a parlor and two bed rooms provided for Mr & Mrs Lincoln. Louise & self with ^{some} ~~some~~ meals in the parlor. At what instance this arrangement was made I do not know. It does not suit me I never yet was made an appendage to any man great or small and but for my interest in my best friend I would throw up & quit. There is a simplicity in Mr Lincoln's manner that but for his coarseness would be very winning. There is however a sometly back of all this one can not get loose of as if the simplicity were put on I was told by P in Springfield that the name of Honest old Abe was given him in derision - as it generally is the fact is shrewdness that is only another name for cunning is not a pleasant quality. All day yesterday in the cars, I could not help contrasting the clear thoughtful

earnest face of Trumbull with dead countenance of our President Neg to Louis Napoleon it is the deadliest face I ever saw and I suppose the contrast makes his smile winning. It would help amazingly for him to cultivate a beard - That much of his poor unfortunate face would be concealed. Poelkingh to let his beard grow and he seemed to look back of my eyes like lightning & brought out the snortive air which laughed immorally

At all the stations on the road the people were assembled & called for speeches. He responded in a very quaint delicious way. He said for example at the first stopping place -

"My fellow citizens. You want to see the man you have elected President - Well I am curious to see the people who elected me - So we are both gratified - We have had a warm contest but now it is all over and I hope we will do well. I think of the people as an old neighbor of mine did of the women kind - At first he got married and during the honey moon was asked how he liked it as far as he got well he said he had not got far but on the whole he believed a woman would treat you right if you treated her right and so I think of the people I wish you a good day" The crowd laughed and cheered kindly after was something exceedingly comic in his manner. This is a specimen of his speeches All were brief & all different -

Nov 22nd '60 At breakfast this morning I again called his attention to the reports from the South. He did not pay much attention but said "Look here I've been turnin this thing over in my mind and I have an argument against Secession - If one state can go out let will thirty states can leave one. This would be in effect turnin the one state out" told him I thought the argument conclusive if any body could be got to listen but was of the opinion that the time for argument had passed we were on the eve of a fight.

"There you go scaring Mrs Lincoln again" he exclaimed laughing

"I aint so easy scared as you are" exclaimed Mrs L in wrath "but Judge Piatt is right. The Southern people will fight these abolitionists I tell you and they ought to and if you have abolitionists in your cabinet they ought to fight you"

"In that case my dear I'll put the Army in your hands - you are the best fighters character I know"

This led to a personal controversy anything but pleasant to strangers and Louis & I hurried through our breakfast and got away

^{Nov 23rd} Heavy Snow storm - Schenck arrived - Lincoln said this morning at breakfast that in going to Washington he had to recollect that Jackson's administration was through a continuous storm and

He supposes that at certain intervals these disturbances were as necessary to our political atmosphere as storms are to equalize and regulate our atmosphere. I suppose my thought was reflected on my face, he is very quick for he immediately added "that is if Old Hickory can stand it" The idea of this great joker whose principal attribute is cunning company him self to a man whose great trait was courage is a little ludicrous.

Great crowds of long haired cadaverous ~~hot goaded~~ ^{hot goaded} letter writers continually calling on Lincoln. At such time are men busy with these fellows if the South does drive things to extremes as I believe they will and really looking upon the men about to take control, I do not blame the South. There is a continual out-puring of blind fanaticism. I notice however that I take very little part in this sort of thing but when pressed turns the subject by a dirty story I have heard him repeat himself in this respect only two or three times. He is a living Rabalais with a supply of foul funny anecdotes that is inexhaustable. Some of these people attacked Turnbull to day for his speech at Springfield I made no comment. He has a relucence positively wonderful. But his ignorance refuses to conceal. I tried him again on literary subjects after breakfast. He treated me to a cross examination of some minutes when changed the subject. I doubt his ever

and rocked violently talking all the time. S with his keen sense of humor nearly convulsed us by drawing her out. She laughed louder than any.

Nov. 24 It told me to day that the politicians were jealous of my influence over and nearness to Lincoln. Poor devils they dont know that I have as little influence over the great fester as his wife and God knows I dont want any. The time approaches and it is not far off when Lincoln will need me far more than I need Lincoln. When the storm comes these political rats will run to their holes and leave this uncouth. Strange creature to the feelings of the pitiless blast when dirty stories however amusing will be of no avail. If a war comes as I believe it is coming it will be brief the land for a little space will be covered with tents - Rebels in the South and traitors at the North will drive us like sheep and none of our lot see this -

Lincoln Believed He Was Unfit to Occupy the President's Chair

Dr. B. J. Cigrand, National President American Flag Day Association, in the Chicago Tribune. 1515

Do we of today understand Abraham Lincoln better than those who were actually at his side? It seems we do, at least the evidence is pre-eminently on our side. That Lincoln did not seek the presidency can now be proved by a number of testimonies which would stand in any court of fair minded men or in the council of fair faced women.

Lincoln has been accused by all his biographers and by hundreds of public speakers of having as early as the campaign for United States senator, when he was defeated by Douglas, entertained the ambition of seeking in every way possible the highest office in the land. This claim is especially placed against him because of a remark he made just before he was defeated by Douglas, his friends cautioning him not to induce Douglas to declare himself on certain questions of slavery, as it sure would destroy his chances for election to the senate, and Lincoln quickly replied that he was after "bigger game" than the senate.

The last year has brought to light some few strong points, which reinforce me in my conclusion that to accuse Lincoln of seeking the presidency is not only contrary to fact, but a deliberate misrepresentation of his personal feelings in the matter. There was sold in New York a letter which belonged to the Maj. William H. Lambert collection, and this shows that Lincoln even as late as April 29 of 1860 wrote to Trumbull, who was the leading candidate for the republican nomination, and Lincoln's lines read:

As you request, I will be entirely frank. You may confidently rely, however, that by no advice or council of mine shall my pretensions be pressed to the point of endangering our common cause. Now as to my opinion about the chances of others (besides Trumbull) in Illinois, I think neither Seward nor Bates can carry Illinois if Douglas shall be on the track, and that either of them can if he shall not be. I rather think that McLean is stronger in Illinois, taking all sections of it, than either Seward or Bates, and I think Seward the weakest of the three.

I have no objection to McLean, except his age, but that objection seems to occur to everyone, and it is possible it might leave him no stronger than the others.

A word now for your own special benefit. You had better write no letter which can be distorted into opposition or quasi-opposition to me. There are men on the constant watch for such things, out of which to prejudice my particular friends against you. While I have no more suspicion of you than I have of my best friend living, I am kept in constant struggle against questions of this sort. I have hesitated to write this paragraph lest you should suspect I do it for my own benefit and not for yours, but on reflection I conclude you will not suspect me. Let no eye but your own see this—not that there is anything wrong or even ungenerous about it, but it would be misunderstood.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This splendid letter, which has been preserved to us, though Lincoln did not wish another eye save that of Trumbull to see it, throws new light on his liberal, unselfish attitude for the presidency. He here is working for Trumbull and the hour of the convention is practically on.

While in Springfield he wrote to a friend by the name of Plekett a letter which contains the following words:

As to the other matter you kindly mention, I must in candor say I do not think myself fit for the presi-

dency. I certainly am flattered and gratified that some friends think of me in that connection, but I really think it best for our cause that no concerted effort such as you suggest should be made.

Let this be considered confidential.

A. LINCOLN.

This is rather hitting the mark, for "Honest Abe" dead, as well as in the living flesh, could be trusted as speaking and writing the truth. He did most emphatically decline being considered for the presidency.

Another item which has just come to the surface, though many hundreds of people might have associated the fact with the candidacy, refers to a bit of history which has been recently disclosed in the political correspondence of Governor Oglesby, and it Lincoln acted like a candidate for the presidency even as late as May 10, 1860, that shrewd politician Oglesby, did not discern it, for when the Illinois state republican convention was in session in Springfield on May 9, 1860, Oglesby was a delegate and made this remark:

"I am informed that a distinguished citizen of Illinois, and one whom Illinois will even be delighted to honor, is present, and I wish to move that this body invite him to a seat upon the stand." He paused a moment, and added in a loud voice: "Abraham Lincoln."

There resulted a most enthusiastic applause and cheering was most hearty. No way could be made through the dense audience, and Abraham Lincoln was borne bodily over the heads and shoulders of the delegates and visitors and carried to the rostrum. Mr. Lincoln was called on for a speech and he arose and addressed the audience. He never mentioned the presidency and only spoke of most commonplace local matters and in all used but seventy-two words. Does this look like a campaigner seeking the presidency, when the national convention at Chicago was only six days away?

He sure acted as though the mentioning of his name for the position displeased him and he sure did not come to the platform and eulogize his record, nor praise his stand on this political issue, nor did he strenuously seek to impress his hearers with the story, "I am the right man for the position and if you will vote for me I will soon put the national house in order." None of this came from his lips—he did not wish the office and he sought only the justification of the cause he was engaged in, namely the preservation of the union and the salvation of the poem of the Declaration of Independence.

But fortunately we need not altogether rely on the written page bearing the signature of Abraham Lincoln, for there has of late been found a man who was a close personal friend and supporter of Lincoln who in an interview with Arthur M. Evans, the author and historian, called upon and visited some of Lincoln's friends who reside in Springfield, and with Dr. William Jayne he had the following interesting conversation:

"Lincoln was our great citizen, of course, but who of us ever thought he

would become president; in fact, I do not think he himself had that dream for many years. In October, 1859, I was talking with Mr. Lincoln—this was about the time that the presidential talk began to be heard all over the country—and I asked him how about it; he said: 'William, I am not fit to be president, but I would like to be attorney general of the United States!'

Words about Lincoln by a Schoolmaster

The following extracts are from the words of Dr Newton Bateman, Lincoln's "little friend, the big schoolmaster," referred to in the center column:

Soon after his [Lincoln's] first nomination for the Presidency, finding his modest little house on Eighth Street, in Springfield, too small for the throngs of visitors which pressed upon him from all parts of the country, his friends installed him in the Executive Chamber of the old State House, where he continued to hold daily receptions till his departure for Washington the following February.

My office during the whole of that period of nearly eight months, was in a room adjoining the one used by Mr Lincoln, and communicating with it by a door which was usually wide open,—at Mr Lincoln's request—to secure for both rooms a better ventilation, and to afford relief to his often over-crowded chamber, the surplus frequently overflowing into my office while awaiting their turn to see Mr Lincoln. Nearly every day, during the summer months, he would pass from one room to the other, shaking hands and chatting with his friends and callers.

It was during these eight months in which I heard and saw him every day, for several hours, that I had excellent opportunities of observing and studying the man.

I do not need to say to you that there was, in Mr Lincoln, a quiet but keen sense of humor. No reference to him would be complete that should omit this characteristic.

* * * * *
His manner in these pleasantries is not to be described. It was usually very quiet—never boisterous, but so piquant and peculiar; such a twinkle in his eye, such working of his mobile face, such lurking fun in his tones, and such quaint drolleries of expression.

One thing in this connection is noteworthy; in not one of hundreds of stories which I heard him tell, was there the semblance of malice or venom—no personal cut or sting. However broad the travesty, keen the wit, or side-shaking the burlesque, he was careful never to wound the feelings or trifles with the sensibilities of any man, present or absent. His humor was the overflow of a gentle and tender nature, and as free from malice as the prattle of a child.

He would tell a story with as much delight and zest at his own expense as at the expense of another,—rather more, if anything, I often thought.

* * * * *
His patience and good nature seemed absolutely proof against all the petty annoyances of life—I often saw him depressed, bowed with grief, mournfully sad—or stirred with indignation—but irritated, and ruffled in temper, I never saw him.

He was one day playing a game of chess with Judge Treat, in the little room back of the Law Library of which I have spoken. At a certain stage of the game, "Tad" came to summon him to dinner. Knowing the boy's genius for mischief, Mr Lincoln kept him away from the table with his long arms, still watching the game, till at length the little rogue's assaults ceased, and the father relaxed his vigilance. The next moment the table rose bodily in the air, tilted, and chess-board and chess-men rolled on the floor!

The good Judge, much amazed, advised summary and condign punishment; but Mr Lincoln, after a moment's futile effort to capture Tad, who made fast time out of the State house, laughingly remarked, (referring to the state of the game when the catastrophe happened), "I guess that upheaval was rather fortunate for you, Judge!" and quietly put on his hat and followed Tad home.

The day after his nomination, Mr Ashman, president of the Convention, with a large party of distinguished gentlemen, members of the Convention, arrived in Springfield to inform Mr Lincoln of his nomination, and to receive his reply.

Mr Lincoln had requested me to escort this party to his house. Mr Ashman's address, and Mr Lincoln's reply are matters of history. The aptness of Mr Lincoln's words, and the unstudied dignity of his manner, in that trying moment, in the little crowded parlor, surprised and delighted his guests, few of whom had ever seen him before. As he sat down, Mr Boutwell, afterwards Secretary of the Treasury, and Senator from Massachusetts, whispered to me: "They told me he was a rough diamond—I protest against the adjective—nothing could have been more elegant and appropriate."

* * * * *
In his oral reply to the committee, he said that he would in due time send them a written note, formally accepting the nomination. Late one afternoon, a few days afterward, he being alone in his room in the state house, and I in mine, he called me in his usual cheery way. Handing me a note written in pencil, he said: "That is my reply to the good people whom you brought to my house the other night. I think it is all right, but grammar, you know, is not my strong hold; and as several persons will probably read that little thing, I wish you would look it over and see if it needs doctoring anywhere."

I took the paper and slowly read it through. It was addressed to the Hon. George Ashman. In it was this sentence: "The declaration of principles and sentiments which accompanied your letter meets my approval, and it shall be my care to not violate it, or disregard it, in any part."

Handing the note back to Mr Lincoln, I said that the language was all strictly correct, with one very slight exception—almost too trivial to mention. "Well, what is it?" said he, "I wish to be correct without any exception, however trivial." "Well, then, Mr Lincoln," I replied, "it would, perhaps, be as well to transpose the 'to' and 'not' in that sentence"—pointing to the one just quoted. Mr Lincoln looked at it a moment and said: "Oh, you think I'd better turn those two little fellows end to end, eh?"

"Yes," I said, "I guess you had"—and he did.

* * * * *
On the eleventh of February, 1861, on the day preceding his fifty-second birthday, Mr Lincoln set out for Washington.

I accompanied him to the railroad station, and stood by his side on the platform of the car, when he delivered that memorable farewell to his friends and neighbors. Of those, an immense concourse had assembled to bid him good bye. The day was dark and chill, and a drizzling rain had set in. The signal bell had rung, and all was in readiness for the departure, when Mr Lincoln appeared on

the front platform of the special car—removed his hat, looked out for a moment upon the sea of silent, upturned faces, and heads bared in loving reverence and sympathy, regardless of the rain; and, in a voice broken and tremulous with emotion and a most unutterable sadness, yet slow and measured and distinct, and with a certain prophetic far-off look, which no one who saw can ever forget, began: "My friends, no one, not in my position, can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all that I am. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty devolves upon me which is greater, perhaps, than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded, except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I can not succeed without the same divine aid which sustained him; and upon the same Almighty Being I place my reliance and support. And I hope you, my friends, will pray that I may receive that divine assistance, without which I can not succeed, and with which success is certain. Again, I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

His pale face was literally wet with tears as he re-entered the car, and the train rolled out of the city, which Abraham Lincoln was to enter no more—till, his great work finished, he would come back from the war, a victor and a conqueror, though with the seal of death upon his visage. Some politicians derided the solemn words of that farewell—but I knew they were the utterances of his inmost soul—never did speech of man move me as that did. Seeing every mournful tremor of those lips—noting every shadow that flitted over that face—catching every inflection of that voice—the words seemed to drop, every one, into my heart, and to be crystallized in my memory. I hurried back to my office, locked the door (for I felt that I must be alone), wrote out the address from memory, and had it published in the city papers in advance of the reporters. And when the reports of the stenographers were published, they differed from mine in only two or three words, and as to even those, I have always believed that mine were right, for the speech was engraved on my heart and memory, and I had but to copy the engraving.

And so, Abraham Lincoln, left Springfield, and passed on to his great work, followed by the benediction and prayers, and by the anxieties too, of a loving people. Events soon proved that he had, indeed, undertaken a task greater than had been devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington.

* * * * *
The storm through which his brave heart and steady hands conducted the Nation, demonstrates the regency of moral ideas in history. * * * Moral ideas are the mightiest things beneath God's throne—right and truth are imperial powers, armed with a Divine prerogative, and with the strength of a decree of God. And those were the forces that Lincoln was appointed to wield—these were the invisible legions that reinforced the armies of Liberty.

Lincoln saw and believed and felt all this—and this it was that made him strong. He recognized, as did no other American statesman of this century, the moral element in politics. He believed with all his intellect and soul, that freedom was right, and that bondage was

wrong—not merely inexpedient, impolitic, but wrong. This is the great, central, golden fact in his character.

It is impossible to account in any other way for the place that Abraham Lincoln has in our hearts, and in the heart of Christendom, today. Not his intellect, clear, robust and powerful as that was—not any masterliness of policy, for he was rather the interpreter of Providence and the agent of the popular will, than a Cromwellian originator of bold policies—not his personal appearance and presence, for he was homely in person, and without elegance or courtliness of manners; no, it is in the light and glory of his moral goodness, his lofty aims and his fidelity to truth, that he stands transfigured today.



Lincoln's Birthday

I am using a personal photograph (but so remote in time as to be almost impersonal) by way of introduction to the Lincoln Day material in this number, because it illustrates my closest approach to Lincoln. The man whose hand was upon my shoulder was Newton Bateman. Lincoln used to call him "his little friend, the big schoolmaster." He was later my teacher as president of a prairie college and I was still later his successor in that office. But when Lincoln knew him he was the Superintendent of Public Instruction in the State of Illinois, in the years immediately preceding Lincoln's going to Washington as President. Again and again have I heard Doctor Bateman tell of the incidents of his association with Lincoln in those days. It was he who made the real Lincoln known to me. And I am thinking that I can not bring that greatest of Americans closer to the teachers and children of this State than through the words of my own teacher, written by the hand that I have felt upon my own shoulder—the last to press Lincoln's hand when he left Springfield for Washington.

A year ago this Lincoln Day, I was out beyond the Euphrates, near the place where Abraham, whose name after more than three thousand years was given to the boy Lincoln, lived before he began his migration toward the Promised Land. It is a long way that we have traveled from Abraham to Lincoln, and I have been thinking often of late that, if those who are discontented with America could but know the state of those who live near the cradle of the race, where Abraham started, they would find Lincoln's Land a paradise by comparison, for yonder are hunger and misery and persecution and daily peril of life and lack of most of those things which are the chief joy of our lives here in a free America.

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7/17/72

R.D.#2, Box 1042
Mohnton, Pa. 19540
12 July 1972

The Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. McMurtry:

Thank you very much for the copy of Lincoln Lore No. 739 containing the review of Lamon's (or Black's) biography of Lincoln.

I neglected to mention in my previous letter that you may keep the Black and Judge Piatt memos. If you use them or quote from them, perhaps you would credit me with having brought them to light. Otherwise you may do with them as you wish.

*included
in file*

Chauncey F. Black, as you probably are aware, was the son of Jeremiah S. Black, Buchanan's Attorney General and later, Secretary of State. Chauncey Black's son, Jeremiah Black, Jr., was married to my great-aunt, Mabel (Evans) Black. She is now living in California and will be coming east later this month to celebrate her 90th birthday with us. Through her indirectly, I recently acquired a dozen or so of the senior Jeremiah Black's letters including several relating to the investigation of the California land claims in 1860.

I will be happy to correspond with anyone who may be interested in the contents of the other Black letters.

Very truly yours,

Evans C. Goodling, Jr.
Evans C. Goodling, Jr.



